

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AF-10 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 NEA-10 EB-07

OMB-01 OES-07 AGR-05 TRSE-00 /124 W

-----140016Z 116624 /63

R 132213Z MAY 77

FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3622

INFO AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

AMEMBASSY SUVA

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 1534

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UNGA, UN, VQ, RQ, FJ, ML, TU, TD, US

SUBJECT: COMMITTEE OF 24 (C-24) VISITING MISSION TO THE

US VIRGIN ISLANDS (VI): CALL BY MISSION CHAIR-

MAN VUNIBOBO

REF: A) USUN 1376

B) SCHIELE/KRIENDLER MAY 12 TELECON

1. ON MAY 12, FIJIAN PERMREP AND
CHAIRMAN OF THE C-24 VI VISITING MISSION VUNIBOBO CALLED ON
AMBASSADOR LEONARD AT THE FORMER'S REQUEST TO THANK HIM FOR
THE INVITATION TO VISIT THE VI AND THE RECEPTION HE WAS
AFFORDED. HE SAID HE HAD BEEN HONORED TO LEAD THE MISSION.
VUNIBOBO CONTINUED THAT ARRANGEMENTS, BY AND LARGE, HAD
BEEN VERY GOOD AND THAT IT HAD BEEN POSSIBLE TO GET A WIDE
CROSS-SECTION OF OPINION IN A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME. WHILE
THERE WAS SOME FEELING THAT CARNIVAL WAS THE WRONG TIME TO
MAKE SUCH A VISIT, HE THOUGHT THAT THE MISSION'S OBSERVATION
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OF CARNIVAL AT GOVERNOR KING'S INVITATION HAD COMPENSATED
FOR ANY PROBLEMS CAUSED BY THE TIMING. POINTING
OUT THAT FIJI HAD REFUSED TO ACCEPT A C-24 VISITING
MISSION TWO YEARS PRIOR TO INDEPENDENCE, VUNIBOBO
DESCRIBED THE US DECISION TO INVITE THE MISSION AS
A "BOLD AND PRUDENT" MOVE WHICH HE THOUGHT WOULD
HELP IN THE C-24. HE ADDED THAT SUCH A MISSION WAS

A "SOBERING EXPERIENCE" FOR SOME C-24 MEMBERS WHO
ADVOCATE INDEPENDENCE FOR EVERYONE.

2. WHILE HIS THINKING ON THE VI MISSION HAS NOT
FULLY CRYSTALIZED, VUNIBOBO SAID IT WAS HIS IMPRESSION
THAT ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR THE VI IS NOT REQUIRED, BUT
RATHER MORE EFFECTIVE USE OF FUNDS NOW PROVIDED. HE
EVIDENCED ASTONISHMENT THAT THE BUDGET OF THE 15 PERSON
SENATE IS OVER \$1 MILLION PER YEAR, COMPARED WITH A
BUDGET OF AROUND \$600,000 FOR THE 76-PERSON BICAMERAL
FIJIAN LEGISLATURE. VUNIBOBO SAID HE HAD INSTRUCTED
ONE OF HIS MISOFFS TO DRAW OTHER SIMILAR COMPARISONS
FOR THE REPORT.

3. VUNIBOBO DESCRIBED THE PUBLIC MEETING AT ST. CROIX
AS "VERY STIMULATING" AND WAS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE
"NO-HOLDS-BARRED" APPROACH OF THE PARTICIPANTS, WHICH
HE THOUGHT WAS HEALTHY AND USEFUL. HE ALSO LAUDED
THE FRANKNESS OF THE PARTICIPATES AT THE SMALLER
PUBLIC MEETING ON ST. JOHN.

4. PUERTO RICO: VUNIBOBO SAID THAT HIS STATEMENT
TO THE PRESS ON PUERTO RICO (THAT THE VI MISSION
DIDN'T OPEN THE DOOR FOR A SIMILAR VISIT TO PUERTO
RICO, SINCE THE QUESTION OF PUERTO RICO'S STATUS
HAD ALREADY BEEN DECIDED) HAD CAUSED SOME CONCERN
TO HIS C-24 MISSION COLLEAGUES, BUT CLEARLY
REPRESENTED HIS VIEWS AND THOSE OF THE GOF. (IN A
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LATER STATEMENT, HE SAID THAT THE MISSION'S MANDATE
WAS TO VISIT THE VI, NOT DISCUSS PUERTO RICO.)

5. INVITATION TO GOVERNOR KING: VUNIBOBO SAID HE
HAD BEEN IMPRESSED WITH GOVERNOR KING AND HAS
RECOMMENDED TO THE FIJIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY AND
TOURISM BOARD THAT KING BE INVITED AS THE PRINCIPAL
SPEAKER AT NEXT YEAR'S TOURISM CONFERENCE IN FIJI. VUNIBOBO
LATER TOLD MISOFF THAT IF KING IS ABLE TO ATTEND
THE C-24 DELIBERATIONS ON THE VI, VUNIBOBO WOULD
LIKE TO HOST A LUNCH IN HIS HONOR.

6. WASHINGTON VISIT: VUNIBOBO TOLD MISOFF THAT THE
PLANNED JUNE 3 DATE FOR THE MISSION'S VISIT TO
WASHINGTON IS NOT CONVENIENT BECAUSE OF A HEAVY
SCHEDULE OF TRAVELING (INCLUDING MAPUTO AND THE LONDON
PORTION OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS MISSION). HE WOULD PREFER
LATE JUNE. SECRETARIAT OFFICIAL KUO LATER INFORMED US
THAT VUNIBOBO HAD DECIDED ON TUESDAY, JUNE 28 FOR THE

WASHINGTON VISIT IF THATIS CONVENIENT TO US. PURSUANT
TO REF TELECON, MISOFF INFORMED KUO THAT THE 28TH
PRESENTS NO PROBLEMS FOR US.
LEONARD

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